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species than real California birds. These birds had undoubtedly died in bird stores. My investigations around San Francisco and in Golden Gate Park were naturally very limited, and being left to myself, some of my identifications were amusing.

It was not until I moved to Marysville, Yuba county, some years later that I received an "eye-opener." Having studied bird life about Marysville a few months and being able to identify only a few kinds, I concluded to catch as many birds alive as possible and keep them singly in cages or together in a large aviary. This had been a fancy with me since the days of my boyhood, as I liked the birds for their song and seldom cared to shoot them. So I made several traps and set them two or three miles from town in different parts of the river bottoms. I used to walk out mornings and evenings to watch the traps and take the captured birds home. In this way I caught many birds, mostly finches, of which I took good care, losing but few by death. Finally my traps were all stolen by boys, although I had put my name and address on them and requested everyone not to disturb them "for Science's sake!"

In my wanderings through the bushes I had several times met a gentleman who went out duck hunting. He would watch me curiously and no doubt thought there was something wrong with me. He soon found out what it was when we began talking to each other and I showed him an Oregon Towhee with the remark that I had just caught a Black-headed Grosbeak. He was astonished at this (it being winter) and soon set me right. Mr. P. was a great collector himself and had a fine collection of skins. He was personally acquainted with Mr. Belding and encouraged me to write to him. I did so and soon received a courteous answer and Mr. Belding's book, "Land Birds of the Pacific District", with compliments. This valuable work has been a great help to me and became to me the real "key of all keys" in the study of Californian birds. With the aid of this work and those of Ridgway and Coues (of the latter's death I read with deep regret) bird study became comparatively easy, especially as the Sacramento Valley is a veritable paradise for most of our valley birds.

Thus I was enabled to take a good many notes and write descriptions and sketches of Californian birds which I sent to Dr. Karl Russ in Berlin. He received them eagerly and published them in his paper *Die Gefederte Welt*. I had been in correspondence with Dr. Russ before I left Germany and he urged me to study closely our California birds as a number of them were not yet fully known to ornithologists in Germany. Thus through the influence and help of Mr. Belding I was enabled to gratify Dr. Russ' wish. These lines I write only in

honor of the great service Mr. Lyman Belding has rendered Californian ornithology, and undoubtedly there are others to whom he has been of the same help as to me. May he be able to long continue his valuable work!

Respectfully yours,

(REV.) F. REISER.



Measurements of the Santa Cruz Jay.

I would like to call attention to some errors in 'Ridgway's Manual' concerning the measurements of *Aphelocoma insularis*, which must have arisen from a scarcity of material at the time of taking them. Examination of thirty-six male and twenty-six female specimens collected by myself on Santa Cruz Island shows that there is quite a difference between the ♂ and ♀ of this species. For instance, the wing measurements are, ♂, 5.00 to 5.72, average 5.32, and ♀ 4.84 to 5.34, average 5.14, whereas 'Ridgway's Manual' gives, irrespective of sex, 5.20—5.30 (5.27). The extremes of tail measurements show ♂ 6.00—7.15, ♀ 6.00—6.60, instead of 6.05—6.25. The culmen in our series also shows great sex variation' viz: ♂ 1.14—1.47 (1.28), ♀ 1.12—1.26 (1.22), while the 'Manual' shows for both sexes 1.15—1.30 (1.22).

The greatest depth of bill in both sexes is .51 inches, while the least ♂ is .47 and least ♀ .44, averaging .49 and .47 respectively. The greatest breadth of bill is also the same, viz: .53, but the least is ♂ .48, ♀ .44, average .50 and .48. The extremes of tarsus are the same in both sexes as well, being 1.61—1.78, but the averages are ♂ 1.70, ♀ 1.67, 'Ridgway's Manual' giving 1.70—1.80 (1.75) inches. These corrections, except as a matter of accuracy, are of no great importance unless an *Aphelocoma* should be found upon the neighboring island of Santa Rosa which might measure differently. I was unable to land upon Santa Rosa Island myself and have seen no record of any jay from there. As this island is only four miles from Santa Cruz Island, it is exceedingly probable that *A. insularis* exists there also.

JOSEPH MAILLIARD.

San Geronimo, Cal.